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The Smear by *Plain Talk*

We have been asked our opinion on the leading article in the magazine *Plain Talk*, for February, entitled "The Strange Case of Merwin K. Hart." It is by *Plain Talk's* editor, Isaac Don Levine.

Mr. Levine prefaces his piece with the old adage that whom the gods would destroy, they first make mad.

Many will judge Mr. Levine's article, and those who closely examine it will feel that sometimes the gods, when they have that objective, make some people quite blind, let alone inaccurate.

We welcomed the inception of *Plain Talk* and gladly gave it our help in obtaining subscribers. We have sung praises of many of its articles. We have in fact induced quite a few people to subscribe to it.

We have had a high regard for Mr. Levine's long and effective fight against organized Communists. He was perhaps the first American journalist who openly attacked them. Yet *Plain Talk* has shown that it is by no means unsympathetic to Socialism, the twin brother of Communism. What we say here is solely about Mr. Levine's February article.

Every quotation Mr. Levine makes from Economic Council Letters is an accurate quotation except one. He omitted two words of Letter 228 and thus changed its meaning. But all of them are lifted out of their context and some of them therefore are falsified. His quotation from Scripture also gives a false picture; we recommend a full reading of the Chapter from which he quotes. Incidentally his closing sentence contains a misquotation from the Scripture.

The entire article is unlike Mr. Levine's usual writing in that it uses the "smear" technique, which every writer recognizes. Its use of such words and phrases as "carefully claim," "on its face," "weird," etc., twists its statements into false statements and inferences. Technically, as a piece of writing, the article has no factual substance. The fragmentary quotations are tied together with sly words and insinuating comments. For instance, when I said in one of the Council Letters "Many thousands of Jews are good Americans" (having in mind not only members of the American Council of Judaism but multitudes of other Jews who thank God they are living in the United States), Levine

writes that this "is shrewdly said," implying that it is a lie concealing an opposite meaning.

The slogan of "anti-Semitism" has clearly gone to Mr. Levine's head—has swept him off his feet and has led him, momentarily at least, to join that fanatical group of men and women known as Zionists, many of whom are neither adherents of the Jewish faith nor descendants of Abraham.

False Implications

Now let's see the inaccuracies in Mr. Levine's article. First he discusses Council Letter 229 of December 15, 1949. On page 2 he gives the title, "Is Christianity to Die?," and on page 3 he quotes it as "Must Christianity Die?" Not important in itself, except that Mr. Levine is drawing an indictment, and a wise writer in drawing an indictment, gets all his facts straight.

On pages 6 and 7 he cites a passage in Letter 183 of January 15, 1948, in which the Council, referring to that provision in the Constitution of the United States, which provides that "the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed," urged Americans to possess themselves of guns, taking care in each case to comply with the license requirements of their respective states.

The text of Letter 183 shows clearly that this suggestion was made because of what happened in Spain and of what threatens in France. In Spain, prior to the revolution, a law had been passed forbidding private citizens to possess guns. Hence the people had no protection against the bands who roved Spanish cities and took men out and shot them. The suggestion was made, too, because France, with five million Communists, has a similar law.

This suggestion of ours brought rage from the *Daily Worker*, *PM*, the *New York Post* and other communistic or extreme left-wing publications. Now Mr. Levine denounces our suggestion. And he clearly seeks to give the impression that we made this suggestion of self protection to American citizens, not as against Communists, but against Zionists! That part of Letter 183 from which he quoted made no mention of Zionists.

So in effect, Mr. Levine is guilty of falsehood.

Then Mr. Levine, who comes out repeatedly with

the most astounding statements, utterly inapropos of anything he has been talking about, says:

"Some singular alliances entered into this weird picture. Among these was Mr. Hart's avowed connection with a well-to-do and self-acknowledged 'brother' of the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem."

And Mr. Levine adds:

"The Grand Mufti is the same political adventurer who, in the cloak of a Moslem spiritual leader, had been in the pay of Mussolini and of Hitler before and during the war. What a travesty on Christianity for Mr. Hart to inject the cause of the Grand Mufti into the sacred cause of American freedom."

Some of this statement is false in fact, and all of it in implication. I have never even mentioned the Grand Mufti in any Council Letter. I have only a hazy idea of what and who he is.

Mr. Levine is clearly relying for this statement on Walter Winchell, the notorious key-hole "commentator" and columnist. Does Mr. Levine accept Winchell as his standard of conduct? The only possible reason why Mr. Levine should introduce the Grand Mufti into his article is based on a statement made by Walter Winchell on the radio on November 27, 1949. This statement we publicly denounced as false.

Early in November I had a call from Mr. Yusif El-Bandak of Bethlehem Palestine, who brought a letter of introduction from Lieutenant General Sir Frederick Morgan. General Morgan was the wartime Chief of Staff to the Supreme Allied Commander.

Incidentally, General Morgan, one of Britain's ablest soldiers and public servants, was the deputy head of UNRRA under LaGuardia. Through Zionist influence, LaGuardia got him removed because he dared to speak out publicly about some things the Zionists were doing in Europe.

General Morgan told me that Bandak had been sent by some 130,000 Christians of Bethlehem and vicinity to appeal to the British and the Americans for aid, lest the entire Christian community in Palestine be wiped out by the aggressiveness of the Zionists who had seized the greater part of the country the Christian Arabs had occupied for 700 years.

General Morgan said a score or more of the most highly respected men in England had formed a committee to assist these remaining Palestine Christians.

Winchell, finding out that a meeting to hear Mr. Bandak was to be held in my office on November 28th, denounced it November 27th and said that Bandak "once worked with Adolf Hitler's stooge in the Near East, the Grand Mufti." A close examination of documentary evidence, including his impressive letters and credentials, and a thorough discussion with Mr. Bandak showed that far from Bandak having "worked with the Grand Mufti," the Grand Mufti was an enemy of Mr. Bandak's family and had sent men to kill Mr. Bandak's father, who escaped, but whose wife and daughter were wounded. It appeared too that Mr. Bandak had for three years been the official political broadcaster to the Arabs of the British Broadcasting Company to counter Nazi and Fascist propaganda. There was great evidence that Mr. Winchell's feverish

assertions were false. There was no evidence they were true.

A statement to this effect was mailed to all Council subscribers over my signature with our December 1st mailing. Since Mr. Levine receives our publications, he presumably saw and read this. Yet he accepts and repeats Winchell's defamation and offers no evidence to support it.

Incidentally, with our January 1st mailing we sent an open letter to Walter Winchell, in which we branded as lies Winchell's statement in his column of December 12th that I had "reportedly paid this Arab \$2000" and that Mr. Bandak was "running all over this nation on a [United Nation's] visa which restricted him to New York City and the United Nations." I said in this letter I had examined Mr. Bandak's papers, that he had no visa from the United Nations and his papers entitled him to travel anywhere in the United States.

"Anti-Semitism"

Now let's see about this business of anti-Semitism.

The Semites include two groups, the Jews and the Arabs. In the controversy between Zionists and Arabs, which led to a bitter war, the Council expressed sympathy with the Arabs. So far as the Arabs were concerned, therefore, we were *pro-Semitic*.

But of course the word is largely meaningless. Like so many other words and phrases that have come into general use, it is but a slogan. When Mr. Levine uses the term "anti-Semitic," it is clear he means that we are anti-Jewish.

This use is wholly untrue. We have always had Jewish members and supporters. By far the greater part of our business in New York City has been and is transacted with Jews—and transacted happily for both sides. We did not pick out these merchants because they were Jews. We picked them out as firms that could do our work well. We would not think of breaking our arrangements with them because they are Jews. If we were against Jews, we doubtless would.

As a matter of fact, our attitude toward Zionists is practically identical with that of the American Council for Judaism under the leadership of Mr. Lessing Rosenwald. We have opposed all along the acquiescence—nay, the leadership—of the United States Government through the United Nations and independently, in stirring up war in Palestine against the Arabs. The American Council on Judaism has taken precisely the same position.

More False Implications

Mr. Levine quotes from our Letter of April 15, 1949, in which we urged a drastic penalty for every Communist and Communist fellow traveler now in Government service. We said:

"They should be given a week to resign and after that should be subjected to the death penalty if they have not declared themselves."

Mr. Levine's comment on this is "What a simple way to dispose of the whole body of Anglo-Saxon jurisprudence!"

Now we did not say the death penalty should be ap-

plied to all Communists found in public office. We said it should be applied *only to those who did not resign within a week after appropriate legislation took effect.*

Our suggestion was that a redefinition of treason suited to modern realities be established—of course by law. *For that will be the only way to get Communists out of public office.* From the standpoint of Anglo-Saxon jurisprudence, that would be an innovation. It would mean merely that Congress and the several state legislatures would pass laws fixing the death penalty for all Communists and fellow travelers found still in office after a given date.

And the reason for so drastic a suggestion is that all existing means have failed. Our government departments have been heavily infiltrated and still are with Communists and fellow travelers, many of whom happen to be Zionists. Every unfair advantage has been taken of our system by unscrupulous Communists. Our own courts, acting as though these Communists were just like other people and entitled to fair consideration, have often given them far greater consideration than any ordinary, law-abiding citizen could expect to get. No doubt these courts have been within the law. But I repeat that our jurisprudence, that is, our law as it reads at present, has been utterly incapable of dealing with the Communist menace.

A hundred illustrations could be given. There was Gerhart Eisler who had been denounced by informed persons as the leader of the Communist movement in the United States and had been convicted of crime—yet was permitted out on bail of \$23,000. Men like Eisler should have been given no bail whatever. And so, of course, Eisler escaped. The making good of the bail he jumped was a small matter to Soviet Russia. She could have paid ten times that sum. Now, Eisler is a cabinet member in the Communist Government of East Germany. The British Government, to whose people we have sent many billions of dollars since the end of the war, declined to hold and return him when they had him in their grasp.

There were the 11 Communist leaders, during whose trial of nine months both lawyers and accused made every effort to ridicule and discredit the court and the able judge who tried them. These Communist leaders are today at large on bail of about \$20,000 apiece.

It is widely known that every effort was made through top Administration channels to prevent the conviction of Alger Hiss. Judge Kaufmann who presided had just been called to the bench and was without experience. His rulings frequently seemed to show bias in favor of Hiss. Felix Frankfurter, the most powerful man in the United States, although a Supreme Court Justice, offered himself as a character witness—and then the trial judge excused him from answering questions that any other witness would probably have been compelled to answer.

Recently there has come the arrest of the German-born English subject Fuchs as one who has betrayed all our atomic secrets, including the H-bomb secrets, to Soviet Russia. The Administration suddenly woke up to the fact that Russia has an atom bomb—very

probably has the hydrogen bomb. High authority has it that our defenses are miserably weak, for all that we are spending 13 billions a year. The conclusion is inescapable that because of the supreme desire on the part of the Administration and of many Republican leaders to cater to the Zionist vote, the most vital American interests have been jeopardized. Our Government has been so engrossed in forcing through FEPC laws, and in making further entangling treaties with other nations and in heaping insults and indignities on the long-ago conquered Germans, and incidentally upon Spain, that Soviet Russia, through her espionage system and through adroit and audacious policies whose underlying principle is *Russia first*, quite possibly stands on the very threshold of completing her conquest of the world—including the United States.

Many of the leading officials of the United States who have acquiesced in or have furthered this policy are Zionists. There is not the slightest question that if the Zionists had been for America first, they could long ago have reversed all this suicidal policy. And Mr. Levine, who has been greatly honored for his long and valiant fight against the Communist conspirators, picks this time unjustly and dishonestly to attack and smear an organization that for 16 years has been openly and unremittently fighting the Communist menace.

The plain fact is that the Economic Council never mentioned either Jews or Zionism until about 1936 when we denounced Communism as the principal factor opposing our efforts on behalf of private enterprise. Then, and then only, we began to be publicly attacked by Zionists.

The chief occasion for attack has been when we resented Zionist attacks upon us.

Let me mention two of these:

Back in 1944, I was notified by the president of an insurance company, of which I happened to be a director, that the B.G. Corporation of New York had canceled a \$20,000 per year insurance policy because I was a member of the insurance company's board. On that occasion, in order to see if I could fathom the minds of the officers of this company, I called with two associates on Mr. Lawrence Goldsmith, President of the B.G. Corporation (whose brother, Arthur G. Goldsmith, has long been active in Zionist and smear organizations). Goldsmith read off a long list of people he accused me of "knowing" and whom he did not think I should know, though I had a perfect right to know them. One of these was Father Coughlin whom I told him I had never met nor communicated with. Goldsmith then said that my statement was a lie, and added "*We have ways of finding out about things, and I can tell you now that we have checked and rechecked, and are certain that during the past two years you have telephoned Father Coughlin every day from your office in New York.*"

I promptly reached for a telephone and called the New York Telephone Company, instructing Goldsmith to listen on another extension, which he did. I requested the Telephone Company to examine its records of long distance calls, and tell me how many calls had been made between my office in New York and that

of Father Coughlin in Michigan, and to notify Lawrence Goldsmith also. A week later the Telephone Company reported it had checked its records for a year and a half, and that no such call had ever been made. No word of apology or explanation ever came from Goldsmith.

Goldsmith's effort is characteristic of innumerable instances of intimidation practiced by Zionists against both Christians and non-Zionist Jews.

My second illustration is, if possible, even worse. It was called to my attention by a friend who was present at an all-Jewish meeting at a Catskill resort in July, 1944. The speaker was one "William Gailmor" (former name Margolies) who, while still on probation after confessing to the theft of six automobiles, was addressing audiences, and who later, while still on probation, was being carried as a commentator on one of the big radio networks. "Gailmor" told the Catskill audience that I had made an hour's anti-Semitic attack before the Resolutions Committee of the Republican National Convention in June, 1944. The story was a complete fabrication, no Jewish question or individual having even been mentioned by *anyone* who appeared before that Committee. The nonsense in Gailmor's statement to that meeting is shown by the fact that when my Jewish friend rose to his feet and asked Gailmor if he had himself been present and heard these alleged remarks, and persisted in his questioning, he was shouted down by cries of "anti-Semitic!"

Levine has the audacity to denounce me and the National Economic Council for opposing Zionism, although it was unquestionably Zionist pressure that gave us "unconditional surrender" in Germany, the Nuremberg trials, the dismantling of plants according to the Morgenthau Plan, and all the vindictive policies toward Germany, as a result of which the chances are growing that West Germany will join East Germany in a Soviet Germany. This would insure the domination of all Europe by Soviet Russia. If Mr. Levine doubts there is any connection between the cause of Communism and that of the Zionists, these Zionist policies, resulting as they would in a Soviet triumph in Germany and probably throughout all Europe, should dispel them.

One-Track Mind

Mr. Levine falls into the error of all Zionists. They believe desperately in Zionism, and they forget everything else. They forget that the secret of the marvelous success of the United States has been the ideal of equal treatment for all citizens which has been, in general, pretty well attained—far more so than in any other great country on earth. They forget that in the past the interests of any minority have not been permitted to block the interests of the great majority.

They are possessed with the idea that they are the chosen people, and that every interest in America must be subordinated to the project of setting up the Government of Israel. They stop at nothing that will help

attain their aims. They employ conspicuously the cowardly smear.

As a matter of fact, it is not that we are either "anti-Semitic" or "anti-Jew." *Mr. Levine and his fellow-Zionists are anti-Gentile.* And the smearing of Gentiles—of any Gentile that Zionists even suspect of daring to stand in their way, is an organized business. This anti-Gentilism so warps the view of this otherwise honorable man, Isaac Don Levine, that he writes a smear article aligning himself and his magazine with the current campaign of Walter Winchell, "John Roy Carlson," *et al.*

Mr. Levine himself was born in Russia; is a Russian Jew. Doubtless as a child he knew the atrocities inflicted upon Jews in Czarist Russia. He is opposed to Communism, and yet he clearly does not understand the sentiments of honorable fair-play long since practiced by true Americans. He has not resisted reverting to the fear and hatred of his youth and of his fathers.

Yet if freedom is to be preserved—for all people within our borders—the Levines and all like-minded men and women must forget their own hatreds, and their talk of hatred.

The National Economic Council will continue and redouble its efforts to preserve America and American free institutions, for the benefit of all the people—including the Jews.

Let's get on with the work!

Merwin L. Hair

President,

NATIONAL ECONOMIC COUNCIL, Inc.

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